

The Master of Music in Music Theory Degree at Michigan State University



Join a mutually supportive, diverse cohort of graduate students who share your passion for music theory.

Thrive in challenging courses that hone your skills in research, pedagogy, analysis, counterpoint, and keyboard skills.



Mentored by dedicated faculty, pursue your research interests and present your work at and outside MSU.



What distinguishes the MSU graduate program in music theory?

Emphasis on both scholarship and pedagogy so that students graduate equally accomplished as researchers and as teachers. Amazing opportunities for students. An inclusive environment in which every student finds constant support from both faculty mentors and peers. A proven track record of successful alumni.

What are the graduate students up to at MSU?

MSU theory students are research powerhouses. They have presented over two dozen conference papers, published five articles and chapters, attended eight graduate-student workshops, and won three best-student-paper awards, just in the last couple of years. And these are Master's students, not Ph.D. students. This work emerges from our small-group research seminars and is mentored by theory faculty members. It gives students a huge head start on their careers.

Where do students go after MSU?

Our Master's program offers outstanding preparation for Ph.D. programs. Students have had a 100% placement rate in top Ph.D. programs such as the Eastman School of Music, Florida State University, Louisiana State University, Indiana University, McGill University, and the University of Texas at Austin.

What opportunities are there for students?

Seven distinguished music theorists visit MSU each year as guest scholars, guest-teaching seminars, presenting cutting-edge work, and mentoring graduate students. Graduate assistantships provide real-world teaching experience mentored by faculty supervisors, as well as competitive funding packages. And faculty members prioritize being accessible to students, advising them both informally and in a bi-weekly theory colloquium on research, teaching, and professional development.



The application deadline is December 1st. Learn more and start your journey as a scholar:

theory.music.msu.edu